On-Page SEO Checklist
as of September 2015

Write for visitors. Edit for search engines.

Keywords / Phrases	One keyword per page (secondary/tertiary versions ok). One page per keyword on the entire site.	
Page URL	Use keyword in page URL. No spaces or underscores - use dashes to separate words *http://mydomain.com/horse-riding-lessons.html/*	Keep it under 10 words
HTML Title Tag	Displays in tab at top of browser window. Use the keyword for the page, placed near start of title. Company name should come last, unless very well known. This title must be unique for each page. Include geographic name when possible/appropriate. *<title>Horse Riding Lessons - Louisville, Kentucky - Rider Farms</title>*	Max: 65 characters (6-12 words)
HTML Description Meta Tag	A clear, short description of the page content. Use keyword for the page, placed near start. Use geographic names when appropriate. *<meta name="description" content="Horse riding lessons available for all age groups and skill levels. Rider Farms is in Louisville, Kentucky.">*	Max: 156 characters (20-30 words)
Title within page content	Use the H1 heading tag. Be descriptive and not clever. Use keyword for the page - have it as close to beginning of the title while being natural. *<h1>Horse Riding Lessons for Children</h1>*	Max: 120 characters

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First paragraph	Summarizes the main point of the page. Include page keyword in the first sentence (then roughly once per short paragraph) Use secondary and tertiary keywords, when appropriate.	Under 6 sentences when possible
Bold / Italics in body text	Save these only for the most important words.	
Headings within body text	Use the H2 heading tag for first level subheadings, H3 for second-level subheadings, and so on. Make the heading descriptive of what follows. Use keywords or secondary keywords when possible. Keep keywords near the start of the heading. * Lessons for 8 and Under * * Pre-school Camps * * Camps for 5-8 Year Olds *	Max 5 words if possible
Images	Try to include at least one image per page. Name the image file descriptively: *times-square-at-night.jpg* and not what comes out of the camera: *DSC-78273.jpg*. Place the image close to the text to which it's related.	No spaces or periods in files names
Alt and Title Attributes for Images	Alt attributes should give a detailed description of the image, and include the keyword if natural to the description. Title attributes should be short descriptions of the image. **	

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External Links	Link text need to be descriptive of the page to which they link, e.g. *more tips on caring for your horse's coat.* Include keywords if possible, that is, if it's natural. Link only to sites that are truly useful for your visitors. Try not to have an external link in your first paragraph. Test the links to make sure they work (and keep testing!)	As few as possible. If a links pages, no more than 100
Internal Links (to pages within the same domain)	Link only to pages directly relevant to this page's content. Link text needs to be descriptive of what you're linking to. Include keywords if possible, that is, if it's natural. Use absolute links (http://mydomain.com/page.html) not relative (../page.html or /page.html)	As few as possible
Keyword Density	Too many instances of a keyword on a single page is considered "stuffing." Placement should be natural, but with an eye to having a few more instances closer to the top of the page content.	Average 4 - 5% of total words on page
Overall Word Count	In order for a page to be considered quality content, there needs to be some substance to it, and anything less than 300 words is unlikely to be very substantial. But don't add a lot of extra wording just to try and have a lot of text on the page - it must always be relevant and focused.	Minimum of 300 words